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LAWRENCE AND MAO TOGETHER

Howard M. Gabbert

**Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania**

3 August 1973

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2. Guerrilla strategy demands strong internal and external motivation.
3. Guerrilla strategy requires dedicated and imaginative leadership.
4. Guerrilla strategy must embody a secure base of operations.
5. Guerrilla strategy cannot be tied to a timetable.

II

USAWC RESEARCH ELEMENT
(Essay)

LAWRENCE AND MAO TOGETHER?

A comparison of the guerrilla strategies of
T. E. Lawrence and Mao Tse-Tung.....

by

Lieutenant Colonel Howard M. Gabbert
Military Intelligence

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U S Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania
3 August 1973

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III

ABSTRACT

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CONSIDERATION OF GUERRILLA STRATEGY

At the outset of any type of analysis of strategy, it is advisable to clarify certain terms of reference. In the context of this essay, strategy is relative to the echelon of enactment. For example, the entire British campaign in Palestine during World War I can be viewed as non-strategic with regard to the war as a whole.¹ Regardless of what happened or took place, the Turks were bound to lose and the allies emerge victorious. It can be argued therefore, that the guerrilla warfare conducted by Arab tribesmen in support of British forces was purely tactical in the arena of the entire war. On the other hand, when viewing the middle eastern area locally, the same guerrilla actions can logically be considered to have had strategic impact on General Allenby's expenditure of men and materials to achieve his objective.² Guerrilla warfare is most often thought of in terms of its tactics. To place it in a strategic role requires the broadening of its scope so that it fits into the perspective of national power. In other words, it should effect the military, political, social, and economic elements of a nation or major force with respect to its objectives. In order for guerrilla strategy to evolve into principles, it must possess commonality of application and generality of use.

T. E. LAWRENCE'S CREDIBILITY

In order to extract valid principles of strategy from the Arab guerrilla support to the Palestine Campaign of WW I, the great

controversy with respect to T. E. Lawrence's tactical accomplishments must be set aside. There are nearly as many versions of Lawrence's personal role with the Arabs as there are authors covering the topic. B. H. Liddell-Hart has tended to view him as a military genius.³ Other authorities at the other extreme of the spectrum credit Lawrence's fame to his literary prowess in the postwar era wherein he neatly arranges events and history into tidy, romantic packages through the use of hindsight.⁴ While it is apparent that the truth lies somewhere in between, it is not important in this analysis of guerrilla strategy. Whether or not Lawrence actually did or did not do the things he claims is irrelevant. The important point is the fact that he was a pioneer in the field of documenting rules and principles of guerrilla warfare that have a direct strategic value. In effect, there is little or no controversy in viewing Lawrence as an author and scholar. Therefore, when this essay refers to a particular strategy as being derived from Lawrence, it does not necessarily contend that Lawrence originated the idea, but that he became the documented source of the information.⁵

LAWRENCE'S STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

To set the stage for adequate discussion of the strategic principles evolving from Lawrence's work with the Arab Guerrillas, it is necessary to have a basic understanding of the overall situation, and of the forces at work in what was then known as

Arabia during WW I. Briefly, the area was then occupied and dominated by the Turks under the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire was under control of the "Young Turk" party, and had formed an alliance with Germany based on the threat to Turkey from Russia.⁶ Both Britain and France held vital interests in the area, and could not afford German expansion in the Middle East. The Arabs were fragmented into tribal groups, but generally had a strong common desire for independence and freedom from the Turks. France had it in mind to enlarge her own sphere by filling in some of the void after Turkish withdrawal. Britain already held considerable sway, and seemed more favorably disposed to the idea of greater Arab independence. The result was a watering down of commitments to the Arabs by Britain due to her stronger wish to avoid damaging the European alliance with France over lesser issues in Arabia.⁷ This situation plagued Lawrence's work with the Arabs by tending to continually pull bits of rug from under his feet since the basic Arab motivation was for independence.

The cycle of events, which in British military history have become known as the Palestine Campaign of WW I, began with the outbreak of an Arab revolt in June of 1916, and climaxed with the seizure of Damascus in October, 1918. T. E. Lawrence became directly involved with the Arab guerrillas in January, 1917. The duration of his guerrilla experience totalled less than 21 months. A detailed chronology of key events of the Palestine Campaign

relating to the Arab Guerrilla Movement is attached as
Appendix 1.

LAWRENCE'S GUERRILLA STRATEGY

Lawrence did not enter the Palestine Campaign without some preparation. Although short on practical military experience, he had devoted much of his education to study of the Arab world. As a student he travelled and lived throughout the area. He knew the language and understood the people and their customs. In effect, he was a self-made "Foreign Area Specialist" as defined today by the US Army. Lawrence was also an avid student of military history, and possessed a deep knowledge of military strategy through study of Napoleon, Foch, Clausewitz, Jomini, and other classic writings. Initially, Lawrence went along with conventional military thinking of the day which considered irregulars or guerrillas to be defensive in nature and not capable of forcing a decision.⁸ Such thinking was of course based on guerrilla type resistance movements in a tactical context. The Arab defeat at Rabegh in December of 1916 convinced him otherwise. He realized that irregulars could not stand and fight against an equal or greater force of regulars. Lawrence began to develop an overall philosophy of guerrilla strategy which he labeled a "war of detachment."⁹

To Lawrence, the first duty of a guerrilla leader was the preservation of his men and himself. Lawrence understood that the greatest value of a guerrilla force did not rest with its ability to inflict damage on the enemy, but with its ability to threaten

the enemy thereby causing him to react and expend resources needed elsewhere against the guerrillas.¹⁰ This underlying principle can be found in the strategic successes scored by the Arabs at Wejh, Aqaba, and Dera'a.

As an individual, Lawrence was eminently suited to be a guerrilla leader. As a person who held little regard for material wealth or comforts, he found it fairly easy to adapt himself to a basic principle of leadership vital to the existence of any irregular force and ergo, its strategy. Lawrence realized that he must adapt himself to the common mode of existence of the individual guerrilla soldier. He must endure the same hardship, share the same food, and be considered "one of them."¹¹ At the same time, he found that the guerrilla leader must not allow himself to get too close to his men socially, but should build an image or mystique in their eyes through constant example. This included being as good or better in basic combat skills and specialties. Furthermore, he found that discipline in the conventional sense is lax, but in those matters which could effect the lives of the group, it must be severe, and at times, harsh. In principle, Lawrence showed that guerrilla leadership must be charismatic and exemplarily constant.

Lawrence's strategy developed a further theorem to the effect that guerrillas must have "an unassailable base of operations."¹² Such a base was vital to being able to carry out the first principle of self-preservation. To imply that such a base should

be an impregnable fortress to be held at all costs is false. In Lawrence's view, such a base would make use of vast space and time.¹³ It was in essence, the "base area" concept used by the Viet Cong in recent years in Vietnam. Tied to this overall premise is the need for a friendly population. Lawrence felt that the degree of friendliness needed to be "to the point of not betraying."¹⁴ Statistically, he felt that 2% of the people in active support with 98% being passively sympathetic was adequate. Another factor of a secure base area was mobility. In order to make the strategy of a spacious base work, the guerrillas must have a high degree of mobility. As a corollary to mobility, Lawrence found that good, accurate, and timely intelligence was essential.¹⁵

A fourth principle for successful guerrilla strategy which evolved from Lawrence was the need for an underlying cause or ideal. In the case of the Arabs, he was quick to sense that the burning desire for independence and freedom from Turkish oppression was the basic motivating factor behind Arab support to the British. In other words, guerrilla strategy must have a definable political objective. As an adjunct to such an objective, Lawrence saw the need for psychological operations to make it real. He developed the art of propaganda as a means of creating a favorable climate for other guerrilla activities. The importance of this aspect in his mind is reflected by example during the move to establish the base at Aqaba. While enroute, Feisal's forces came upon an

unprepared Turkish company at Aku el Lissal. They quickly gained an unexpected tactical victory. They soon learned of another Turkish company in a like situation near Ma'an, and by following the tactical rule of exploitation, could have garnered another victory. Lawrence's strategic thinking intervened and he convinced Feisal to proceed on to the assigned objective. They withdrew and continued on to Aqaba. Lawrence then made use of the victory through propaganda to enlist the support of other Arab tribes in the new area.¹⁶ By exploiting the minor victory psychologically, the strategic establishment of the base at Aqaba was enhanced.

Lawrence's own words stress the value of propaganda:

A province would be won when we had taught the civilians in it to die for our ideal of freedom. 17

In retrospect, study of Arab guerrilla support to the Palestine Campaign shows that T. E. Lawrence effectively documents four basic strategic principles which form a foundation for success:

1. Guerrilla strategy must be based on avoiding any engagement which might result in heavy casualties or undue loss of life. The continued existence of the unit is strategically more important than its tactical actions.

2. Guerrilla strategy depends upon leadership that is charismatic and constant to a degree far beyond that needed for conventional forces.

3. Guerrilla Strategy must be supported by an "unassailable base of operations" incorporating space, popular support,

mobility, time, and good intelligence.

4. Guerrilla strategy must be pointed towards a definable political objective or moral ideal adequately supported by psychological actions.

Lawrence's own words from Evolution of a Revolt summarize his own overall view of guerrilla strategy:

Granted mobility, security, time, and doctrine, victory will rest with the insurgents for the algebraic factors are in the end, decisive, and against them, perfection of means and spirit struggle quite in vain. 18

THE CREDIBILITY OF MAO TSE-TUNG

As compared to T. E. Lawrence, there is little controversy with regard to the documented experiences and thoughts of Mao Tse-Tung. Although there is deep disagreement with respect to Mao's political philosophy, few would argue with the validity of the strategy he used to achieve it. In such cases success can be almost incontrovertible. Mao's credibility is backed up not only by success, but by the test of time. Considering that he began unfolding his guerrilla strategy around 1927, and that it endured continuous development and usage through 1947, Mao's credibility seems to have more substance than Lawrence's.¹⁹ In terms of proof in the field, we are speaking of 30 years of trial and experience as opposed to 21 months!

MAO'S STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

Mao's rise to power in China is the product of a lifetime

effort aimed at the building of a solid Marxist nation. Focussing on China after World War I, we find a political cauldron bubbling with various recipes for China's future following the fall of the Manchu dynasty. The Kuomintang (KMT) emerged as more or less a republican element striving to end foreign domination. It evolved into a virtual police state under democratic delusion which denied Chinese history and the Confucian ethic. When Sun Yat-Sen appealed to the West for recognition and assistance to unite China and form a nation, he was rebuffed. On the other hand, the newly arisen Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was ready and willing to help. This led to serious Chinese study of Marxism as a solution to their problems. The Chinese Communist Party was born in 1921, and among its founders was a young librarian from Peking named Mao Tse-Tung.²⁰ Communists were allowed to join the KMT, and it was reorganized along communist lines. A young officer named Chiang Kai-Shek was sent to Moscow for training and returned to head China's Whampoa Military Academy. Soon, communists began dominating the KMT. Out of fear of becoming a Chinese "Kerensky" Chiang turned on his communist allies in Shanghai, and in 1927 charted his own course.²¹

Chiang's power extended into the Army hierarchy, and he consolidated his power in the tradition of a warlord. Several Chinese Army units mutinied and attacked various KMT-held cities. Failing in this, they withdrew to the mountains under the leadership of Mao Tse-Tung. For five years, Chiang attacked Mao's

growing guerrilla army. Between 1930 and 1933, Mao defeated four major campaigns against him. Fighting at times with a numerical disadvantage of 10 to 1, Mao used mobility and timing to defeat Chiang. By October 1934, Chiang was able to concentrate sufficient modern combat power to turn Mao out of the mountains of Chingkanshan. This began the famous "Long March" to Yenan. This strategic move by Mao took him over 6,000 miles from Fukien to Shensi over a one year period. Fighting all the way, Mao began the march with 100,000 men and arrived with less than 20,000, most of whom had been recruited along the way. They withdrew to the caves of Yenan where they stayed for about ten years, building their strength, and continuing to fight Chiang and then, the Japanese.²²

Following the Japanese invasion of China, Mao and, to a lesser degree Chiang, both concentrated their efforts against the foreign invader. This is not to say that they united for such a purpose, but only that it posed a common threat which permitted a certain degree of mutual interest. Neither side, however, gave up a chance to gain an advantage over the other. Finally, with the Japanese surrender in 1945, Mao was able to return to his basic strategic effort - the political control over all of China. By 1949, his strategy bore the fruit of victory and Chiang's forces were driven from the mainland of China. By that time, Mao's guerrilla force had become a conventional army

possessing modern weapons and capabilities. A new chapter had been written into the book of guerrilla strategy.²³

MAO'S GUERRILLA STRATEGY

Basically, Mao conducted his guerrilla war wholly on his own. There was no outside force to support as in Lawrence's case. There were, however, outside forces to oppose during the Japanese invasion, but throughout, the primary strategic enemy was Chiang Kai-Shek and the KMT. Throughout all of the various phases and passages of time, Mao's strategy remained relatively constant in its broad sense. His objective of political domination never wavered. Mao's prolific writings and doctrinal dissertations dwell in the main on the detail of tactics needed to achieve his objective, however, the message of his strategy comes through loud and clear.

During the early 1930's, Mao's basic strategy was to avoid defeat or military setback by the KMT which would threaten the continued existence of the guerrilla movement. To achieve this end, Mao relied on great mobility, good intelligence, and a friendly terrain. Mao felt that at this stage it was more important to take supplies and arms than to stress annihilation of enemy troops.²⁴ Mao knew that in the realm of China as a whole, he was weaker than his opponent. He clearly saw the need for time and security as well as spoils with which to build strength. This basic principle is clearly reflected by his own words:

Our strategy is one against ten while our tactics can be formulated as being ten against one. Annihilation of the enemy is secondary to the capture of spoils.....25

During the period of the "Long March," Mao used maneuver to preserve his guerrilla movement. The basic strategy of the march involved achievement of great displacement through endurance of severe hardship using strength gained through strong political or moral motivation.²⁶ The moral strength of Mao's purpose was imparted to his followers to the degree that they could simply out-endure and out-persevere the enemy. The sacrifice of men and materials which characterized the "Long March" was a tactical necessity that would have broken the will to continue of any group of men with lesser motivation. In concert with the development of strength through political motivation, Mao found it vital to extend this same doctrine as an outreach into the realm of the people.

Much of the region traversed by the guerrilla army was in control of traditionally hostile hill tribes. Mao realized the importance of gaining their friendship and support. His technique was simply to exploit the actions of Chiang's forces. In this way Mao was able to portray a definite distinction between his forces and those of the KMT. His political gospel had great appeal, and when supported by actions and propaganda dealing with the excesses and abuses of Chiang's army, he gained his greatest strength in the friendship of the rural and hill people. A vivid example of

this was his passage through Lololand and the subsequent crossing of the Tatu River.²⁷

In the Caves of Yenan, Mao was able to lick his wounds and rebuild strength in his unit. The rugged hill country and a friendly population provided the necessary insulation and security. His strategy here was to continue building strength through political motivation backed up by selected and thoroughly planned military actions designed to exploit KMT weaknesses and mistakes. Soon, Japanese invaders forced a slight deviation from Mao's strategic objective. Mao realized that the Japanese presence must be eliminated before he could tend to Chiang Kai-Shek, and they became his first tactical priority. Mao exerted much strength and effort in the form of guerrilla warfare against the Japanese. This also gave him the chance to experiment and develop ideas and principles of guerrilla tactics that would help him later to achieve his strategic objective. By using sound guerrilla tactics, Mao gained strategic strength over Chiang. Chiang's army also engaged the Japanese, but along conventional lines supported by the United States and the western alliance. Strategically, Mao gained strength while Chiang became weaker. His doctrine of protracted war became a proven reality.²⁸ He insured that all of his actions were planned and thereby initiative in nature. His purpose was to attack only weakness in order to build his own strength. In Hopeh for example, one of Mao's major elements built and developed a system of underground tunnels from which

they fought and lived. They never came out unless a victory was assured.²⁹

Mao's most unique element of guerrilla strategy came into existence following the defeat of Japan. With the Japanese invader eliminated as an obstacle, Mao again turned to face his primary strategic adversary, Chiang Kai-Shek. This time he found himself to be the stronger of the two. The campaigns against the Japanese resulted in Mao's gaining vast quantities of war materials and conventional weapons. His political campaigns had resulted in the majority of the people uniting behind him. His geographic deployment afforded the opportunity to receive some logistical support from the USSR. Despite a number of efforts on the part of the United States and her allies to assist the forces of the KMT, Chiang was in a much weaker position. Within three years, Mao forced the KMT to withdraw to the island of Formosa or be annihilated. His strategic objective had been achieved.³⁰

To briefly sum up, Mao's guerrilla strategy embodied the following principles:

1. Guerrilla strategy must always seek to preserve its own existence regardless of the obstacles before it.
2. Guerrilla strategy demands strong and fully dedicated leadership willing to make any sacrifice or endure any hardship to reach the strategic objective.
3. Guerrilla strategy depends on a secure base area

from which to operate. Time and space are used to gain strength. Mobility and popular support form the base area cornerstones. Good intelligence welds it together.

4. Guerrilla strategy must encompass strong political motivation not only within the guerrilla unit, but with an outreach that brings popular support to the foreground. The individual must be able to gain tremendous strength by a dedicated belief in what he is doing and the importance of each contribution.

5. Guerrilla strategy must recognize that eventually, with the constant development of strength and support, a transition will occur whereby the guerrilla band becomes a strong conventional army.

THE STRATEGIC COMPARISON OF MAO AND LAWRENCE

As individuals, Lawrence and Mao had much in common. Both were born in the late 19th century - Lawrence in 1888 and Mao in 1893. Both were considered to be erudite intellectuals. During Lawrence's 47 years of life, he spent about five of them studying the Arab region and its people. After two years as an intelligence staff officer in Cairo, he served nearly two more with Feisal's Arab irregulars.³¹ Mao on the other hand still lives and has counted 80. Of his 80 years, he has spent about 46 of them in developing a unified, Marxist China. He has had the experience of applying the principles of guerrilla strategy for a length of time that almost equals Lawrence's entire life. If Lawrence were alive

today, he and Mao would be contemporaries. It is remarkable that two individuals born within five years of one another, and coming from such vastly different cultures and backgrounds, could produce guerrilla strategy embodying such a high degree of duplicity in principle.

There is evidence to show that Mao and several of his key subordinates had read Lawrence's Seven Pillars of Wisdom, and that it served as one of the guiding publications for their guerrilla strategy against the Japanese.³² Basically, Mao's concept of warfare stems from that of Sun-Tzu, tempered by the political philosophy of Karl Marx. Lawrence tended to base his strategy on distinctions drawn from his own studies of classical warfare, which were then placed in an actual guerrilla environment and experimented with. The strategic objectives of both leaders were, however, quite different.³³

The overall strategy of irregular warfare is highly complex due to the variety of possible aims and objectives. History shows that the most common guerrilla strategy has been for the insurgent to rise up against a foreign invader. Usually this is done in support of an outside conventional force such as in Europe during World War II. In this situation, the guerrilla strategy is to prevent or make the interior movement of men and equipment difficult and costly to the enemy. The result is most likely to cause the enemy commander to divert forces for rear area security which might otherwise be committed against the conventional force. This in effect,

parallels Lawrence's strategy of tying up the Turkish Forces through use of a constant threat to their line of communication.

When the guerrilla rises up against an internal establishment wholly on his own with no outside force to support, the strategy must be different. This was the situation for Mao Tse-Tung. In Mao's case, the strategic aim was not to divert or draw the enemy to the guerrilla, but to restrict the enemy to his own considered safe areas and lines of communication. The strategy would permit contact only when it was fully planned, and the enemy force was small enough to be destroyed with little risk to the guerrillas. The result of such a strategy would eventually give the guerrillas control over the bulk of the countryside leaving the enemy holding on to the major cities and transportation routes.

Both Mao and Lawrence followed similar strategic principles which allowed them to maintain and build their own strength while the enemy dissipated his own. Both men believed in like principles and requirements of guerrilla leadership. Both believed in the necessity of strong political motivation. Both shared the essentiality of the principle of a secure base area combined with mobility and good intelligence. Mao continued to develop strategy beyond the point where Lawrence had completed his mission. This resulted in an additional concept of guerrilla strategy not envisioned by Lawrence - the eventual conversion of a guerrilla force into conventional army.

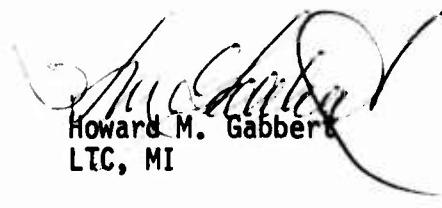
Some differences in strategic principles also exist. Where Lawrence's top priority consideration was the preservation of his people, Mao felt that political indoctrination was of greater value. In this sense, Mao was able to expend life when necessary in order to maintain the overall viability of his cause. This is not to say that Mao deliberately sacrificed men to achieve an objective, but only that when he was forced into such a situation (ie., the Long March), his strong political emphasis would have the power to offset physical losses with moral strength. The factor of time was also of greater strategic value to Mao than to Lawrence. This was due partly to the objective of each, and partly to different cultural concepts of time. With regard to the principle by which Mao's guerrillas ultimately became a conventional army, it is impossible to say whether or not Lawrence would have seen the same eventuality had their situations been reversed. Here again, time was the major factor. It is logical that if the guerrilla strategy which enables the guerrilla to grow stronger while the enemy grows weaker, were carried out to its end, the guerrilla force will eventually outweigh the enemy. When the guerrillas reach the point of superior strength in men and arms, the change from hunted to hunter is natural.

RESULTANT STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

Putting Mao and Lawrence together is an interesting hypothesis. The objective will finally determine the strategic priorities to

be used. Therefore, on a non-priority basis, the following principles are selected as having commonality of application to future guerrilla strategy:

1. Guerrilla strategy must encompass a definable political objective.
2. Guerrilla strategy demands strong motivation both within and without the irregular force that is based on the political objective.
3. Guerrilla strategy requires a high degree of dedicated and imaginative leadership. Traditional trappings of rank and privilege must be set aside.
4. Guerrilla strategy has to embody a secure area of operations combining mobility and good intelligence.
5. Guerrilla strategy cannot be tied to a timetable. The strength of conviction in the political purpose must be strong enough to eliminate time as a constraint. If it is necessary for the movement to transcent a generation or more, then so be it.


Howard M. Gabbert
LTC, MI

CHRONOLOGY OF THE ARAB RESOLT AND THE PALESTINE CAMPAIGN

- Oct 1915 Sir Henry McMahon Promises British support to Sharif Hussein and the possibility of an independent Arab state south of 37° latitude except Baghdad and Basrah.³⁴
- May 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement is signed between Britain and France which divides the Ottoman Empire into five zones.³⁵
- Jun 1916 Britain reassures independence of Arab States. Hussein's sons Ali and Feisal lead an uprising near Medina, terminus of the Hejaz Railway.³⁶
On 9 June, Arabs attack Jidda but are repulsed. With British naval gunfire and air support, Arabs reattack Jidda on 11 June, and by 16 June seize both Jidda and Rabegh.
- Jul 1916 Led by Feisal, Arabs seize Yambo.³⁸
- Aug 1916 British military mission³⁹ under Lt. Col. Wilson sent to advise Hussein.
- Sep 1916 Arabs under Hussein's son Abdullah attack and seize Taif (70 miles S.E. of Mecca).⁴⁰
- Oct 1916 Feisal has a plan to move his force of 8,000 from Yambo to Wejh, 180 miles away. A pending Turkish counteroffensive dissuades him.⁴¹
- Dec 1916 Turks begin their counteroffensive. Recapture Rabegh from Arab defenders.⁴²
- Jan 1917 Turks counterattack to secure Medina. Lt. Col. Newcombe is sent to assist Wilson with the British mission. Capt. T.E. Lawrence arrives as a member of Newcombe's staff at Jidda.⁴³
Lawrence establishes firm rapport with Feisal, and convinces him that the move to Wejh is essential, and that Abdullah's force be moved to Wadi Ais, 70 miles North of Medina astride the Hejaz Railway. This plan is supported by Wilson, and Feisal agrees.⁴⁴
- Jan 1917 With British naval support, Feisal moves a force of 10,000 men plus an Egyptian mountain artillery battery to Wejh. The move is completed by 23 Jan, and turns out to be a strategic displacement which permits the Turks to tactically ignore the Feisal force and concentrate on defending the Hejaz Railway.⁴⁵

CHRONOLOGY OF THE ARAB REVOLT AND THE PALESTINE CAMPAIGN

- Feb 1917 Lawrence meets with General Allenby, and is given a free hand in advising Feisal's light irregular force. He is given the mission of extending Arab operations to the North, and of opening a new base at Aqaba.⁴⁶
- Jun 1917 Lawrence and Feisal begin the move to Aqaba.⁴⁷
- Jul 1917 The Base is established at Aqaba.⁴⁸
- Oct 1917 Lawrence moves to enlist support from Arab tribes near Dera'a. He fails in an attempt to destroy the bridge at Yarmuk.⁴⁹
- Dec 1917 Sharif Nasir and Emir Zeid seize the village of Tafileh commanding water traffic on the Dead Sea. Allenby wanted such traffic halted.⁵⁰
- Jan 1918 Nasir and Zeid plan to abandon Tafileh in face of a Turkish counterattack. Lawrence intervenes and convinces them to stand. He provides a plan and then leads them in a classic battle of annihilation imposing a severe defeat on the Turks.⁵¹
- Jan-Aug 1918 The Arab forces are now considered to be part of Allenby's Army in Palestine. They concentrate on guerrilla actions which provide flank security and interdiction of the Turkish line of communication. These Arab guerrillas were commanded by Feisal and "led" by British Lt. Cols. Lawrence and Joyce. They developed the specialty of destroying trains.⁵²
- Sep 1918 Lawrence is given the mission of attacking the railway at Dera's as part of a deception operation to screen Allenby's thrust to Damascus. Lawrence succeeds in severing the railway and draws the Turkish IV Army to him. He is joined by the Australian Cavalry Brigade at Dera'a.⁵³
- Oct 1918 After leaving Dera'a, Lawrence and Feisal move rapidly with an advance element to Damascus. Allenby wins the race to Damascus when at 0600 on 1 October, the 10th Australian Light Horse Regiment enters the city. Lawrence and his party arrive in the city at about 0830 and establish an Arab Headquarters with Feisal in charge. Lawrence requests termination of his assignment which is granted by Allenby. The Palestine Campaign is ended.⁵⁴

FOOTNOTES

1. B. H. Liddell-Hart, Strategy, p. 196.
2. Official History of the Great War, Military Operations, Egypt and Palestine, Vol. II, p. 375.
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